

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 3, and 5-8 have been amended, and claims 2, 4, and 15-18 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, and 5-14 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 9 are independent claims. Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 4-8 contain allowable subject matter and claims 9-14 are allowed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the above amendments do not add new matter to the application and are fully supported by the specification.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because it (a) places the application in *prima facie* condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise new issues requiring further search and/or consideration by the Examiner because similar subject matter was previously considered by the Examiner and thus further consideration and/or search by the Examiner is not warranted; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. For at least these reasons, entry of the present Amendment is therefore respectfully requested. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Claim Objection

In the Office Action, claims 4-8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and all of its limitations have been added to claim 1, thereby rendering this objection moot.

Claims 5-8 have been amended to depend from now allowable claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 5-8, as amended, overcome the stated objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection for claims 5-8.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3 and 15-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over applicant's admitted prior art (APA) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/015165 applied for by Kim, *et al.* ("Kim").

Claim 1 now contains the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 4, and thus, is allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 2 and 15-18 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1. Claim 3 depends from claim 1 and is allowable at least for this reason. Since none of the other prior art of record, whether taken alone or in any combination, discloses or suggests all the features of the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully submit that an independent claim 1, and all the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 4-8 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 5-8 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 9-14 are allowed.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submit that all of the stated objections and grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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